

**Recognition of Public Diplomacy Alumni by Donna Marie Oglesby
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I was seven years old, and living a complete Army Brat life in Japan when USIA was born. My awareness of the agency -- newly responsible for representing the communication and culture of the United States abroad -- came a little later. Fifty years ago, in fact, when inspired by President John F. Kennedy I decided to go beyond taking a mere fifty mile hike and added attending mass every day during lent in 1963 to my devotions. To fulfill my pledge, in Ankara, Turkey, where we lived then, I got up early and walked down the long hill to the Italian Embassy chapel for mass before getting the bus to the DOD's George Marshall Regional High School every day.

On the way to the chapel I would walk past the distinguished, cool white marble establishment known as The Embassy of the United States of America. A little further down the street I noticed -- and then began to observe -- another more inviting building. In memory it sat in green space, had a porch and changing exhibits in window boxes. In time, I noticed that movies of our space flights were shown in the evenings in the park across the street. USIS, it was called and it seemed to offer a warmer, more human American face to the Turkish society in which we lived than the refined building up the street. Intuitively, I knew what was going on there would be a part of my life.

By 1969, I was in my second year of graduate study at the School of International Affairs at Columbia University, when a pair of Foreign Service recruiters came to town. One fades to grey in my mind's eye. The other has stayed a Technicolor image dressed

in a blue blazer, a wide flowery tie, loafers with tassels. He sported longish, wavy hair, a rakish grin and the wildest eyebrows I had ever seen. Fresh off an assignment as student affairs officer working to engage third world students studying in London, he was wicked cool. I decided then and there that if USIA had room for Mike Pistor, it might have room for me.

Mike Pistor was the first name I knew in USIA. For my husband, a Peace Corps Volunteer in Chile in 1965, the first was Don Manuel. All the volunteers knew him and revered him. He ran the USIS film loan library they so depended on. The emotional connection with him was so strong, my husband still sees him vividly and talks of his dignity, his competence and his caring for the volunteers and his pride in the film loan program he ran.

By the summer of 1970 I was in the A-100 class embarked on a Foreign Service career in an agency full of colorful, talented, creative people whose ties were a little wider and earrings a little more dangled than those who had checked that other box on the Foreign Service exam. I quickly learned the names and faces of colleagues in the civil service too. Those who designed the exhibits and films that caught my eye in Turkey, who created and managed exchange programs like the one I had been on at the the East West Center and later in Tokyo, those who wrote for the wireless file on which I worked and in personnel. Above all there was Stan Silverman. Agency Comptroller on my first Washington assignment as Brazil - Mexico dest officer and Agency Comptroller on my last as Counsellor. Eternal, irreplaceable Stan.

By my naming of three, I hope thousands of other Agency names have flooded from your hearts into your brains and onto your tongues. I'd like to close by inviting all USIA Alumni present to name out loud your trinity of Agency employees letting the buzz bring the whole community to life in our presence once more.

Thank you